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**RESPECT:** a personal development programme  
for young people at risk of social exclusion

**Final Report**

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October 2009



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## Chapter 1

### The RESPECT programme

#### 1.1 Introduction

The RESPECT programme was funded for three years from the Government's *Invest to Save* initiative. It brought together a number of elements of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's earlier work with young people in a concerted attempt to tackle wider challenges pertinent to the fire services and partner agencies.

The RESPECT partnership was made up of the following organisations:

- Cheshire Fire Service;
- The Youth Federation;
- Cheshire County Council;
- Halton Borough Council;
- Warrington Borough Council;
- Cheshire and Warrington Connexions.

RESPECT was a targeted intervention for young people living in Cheshire, Halton and Warrington who were aged 11 to 16 years and who were disaffected and/or displayed antisocial behaviour. These young people may:

- have been temporarily or permanently excluded from school;
- be in danger of exclusion;
- have a high level of unauthorised absences;
- be involved in antisocial behaviour;
- be known to the youth offending teams.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service described the aim of the RESPECT programme in the following way:

RESPECT aims to transform the lives of young people who have dropped out or were at risk of being excluded from school by triggering changes of behaviour and improving their confidence and self-esteem. Ultimately we wish to develop young people into better citizens who will understand the word 'RESPECT' (Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, 2007).

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The RESPECT programme comprised four elements:

- Option One – a disciplined and practical course based around fire service activities;
- Option Two – a tailored youth work and informal education programme led by the Youth Federation;
- *On the Streets* – a detached youth work project run in conjunction with Halton Youth Service;
- a summer holiday project.

As Option One and Option Two recruit participants in a similar way, the RESPECT publicity leaflet provided referrers with information about the two courses so that they could refer a young person to the most appropriate element of the programme. Option Two, for example, provided more individualised support to young people for whom, at that point in time, the more structured and disciplined format of Option One might not have been appropriate.

## **1.2 Option One**

Option One was a one day per week course which was designed to last for 11 weeks. It ran three times per year during school term time and up to 12 young people could attend each course. A number of courses (usually six or seven) took place at any one time on different days in different areas of Cheshire and Warrington.

The Option One course was designed to engage young people in practical, hands on fire service drills and activities. The course aimed to ‘trigger’ attitudinal and behavioural change and improve confidence and self-esteem through ‘addressing issues around team work, taking responsibility, [the consideration of] consequences of actions, problem solving and lateral thinking’ (Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, 2006).

Each Option One course ended with a graduation ceremony to which the young people could invite their own guests. The activities included in the Option One course were outlined below:

- team building;
- basic fire-fighter training;
- water awareness;

- 
- outdoor activities such as rock climbing and canoeing;
  - fire awareness and hoax calls;
  - road traffic collisions;
  - live fire fighting.

### **1.3 Option Two**

Option Two was run by the Youth Federation and offered an alternative to the Option One course. It was a one day per week course which was designed to last for 10 or 12 weeks. A number of courses could run at any one time in different areas of Cheshire and Warrington and up to 14 young people could attend each course.

The Youth Federation saw the relaxed and flexible environment in which young people could receive specialist youth work interventions as the defining characteristics of Option Two. They were keen that Option Two was not seen as a course for young people who had 'failed' to engage with Option One but as a positive alternative for people who were not ready for the course or who had needs that could be better addressed in a different way.

The aims of Option Two were centred on developing young people's citizenship, improving their social and interpersonal skills, and assisting their reintegration at school. The programme of activities for each course was devised with the particular young people in mind. The plan, however, was fluid and activities could be substituted or re-ordered within the course. Changes were made if the group was not considered to be ready to deal with a topic or, if other issues were identified, alternative activities could be introduced to the course. A key element of each activity was the attempt to link the skills the young people were learning to other contexts, so that they could apply them in other situations, including school.

Examples of the topics included in the Option Two course are outlined below – each Option Two course ended with a celebration event:

- team building;
- volunteering and leadership;
- personal development and life skills (e.g. through art);
- healthy lifestyles;
- aggressive behaviour management;
- fire service activity;

- 
- young people and gambling;
  - canal barge training.

#### **1.4 On the Streets**

In Halton, the RESPECT programme was implemented in a different way. Following consultation with the partners in the Borough, it was argued by the local authority that there was already adequate alternative curriculum provision in Halton (as was to be provided through RESPECT in Cheshire and Warrington). However, it was suggested that the Fire and Rescue Service became involved in a detached youth work project that was already being developed by the Youth Service using Neighbourhood Renewal Funding.

The aim of *On the Streets (OTS)* was to meet young people on the streets in areas of 'embedded youth nuisance'. When an area was identified and the project was deployed, an OTS team of youth workers from Halton Youth Service and Fire Service staff from the RESPECT team worked in the locality on three evenings a week for a period of six months. Their aim was to engage young people, develop activities and facilitate positive links between young people and others in their community. One objective of the project was to construct a legacy that the young people and community could build upon when OTS moved to another area. Between February 2007 and June 2009, OTS operated in four areas:

- Ditton;
- Halton Lodge;
- Houghton Green;
- Appleton.

An over-arching feature of OTS was that it was founded on an asset-based approach to youth development. Halton Youth Service saw OTS as an initiative that enabled young people to fulfil their right to participate in positive activities, rather than a deficit-based service which diverted them from antisocial behaviour. OTS was also part of Halton's *Youth VOICE* strategy which aimed to develop participation and decision making skills in young people so that they could be more involved in their local communities.

#### **1.5 Summer holiday project**

The Fire and Rescue Service staff who worked within the RESPECT programme delivered a summer scheme during the school holidays in July and August 2007.

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Several options for the summer scheme were considered earlier in the year but it was decided that the RESPECT programme should contribute to Cheshire Fire and Rescue services Halton Summer Arson Reduction Campaign. In 2006, Fire Service statistics showed that there had been a 300% rise in small deliberate fires in Halton during the month of July (Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, 2007).

As one element of a broader Fire Service strategy in the area, the RESPECT team were to staff the outreach vehicle in one of the 'hot spot' areas, Runcorn Hill. RESPECT staff visited the area before the summer holidays to speak to rangers and gather information about the area and during the summer. The plan was for three members of the RESPECT team to be based there between 5pm and 8pm, three times a week.

## **1.6 The evaluation**

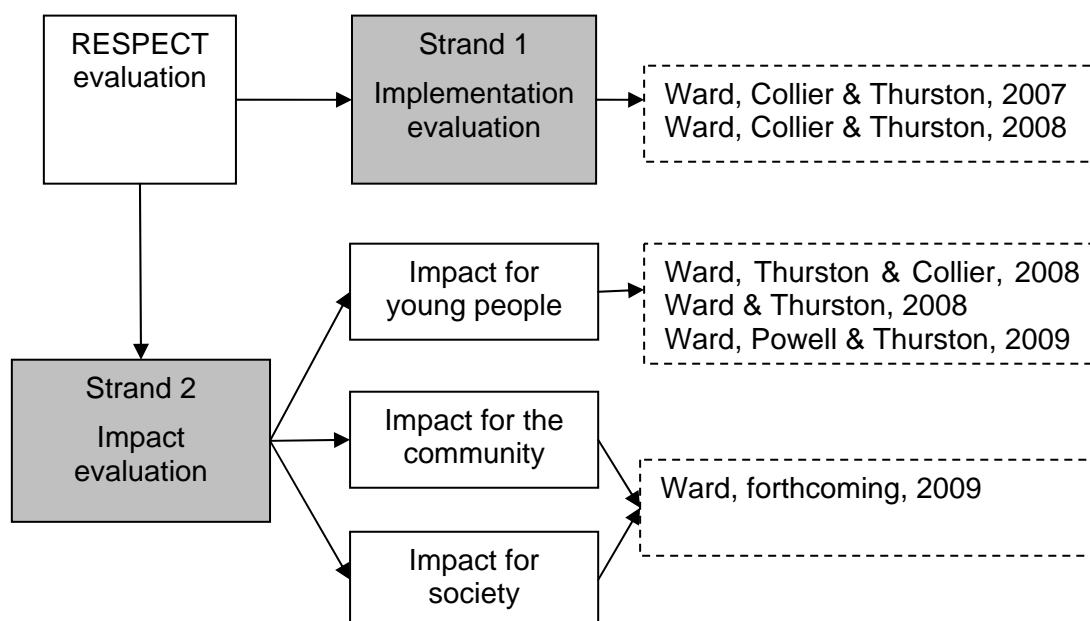
A three year evaluation was built into the RESPECT bid in order that the individual, community and societal benefits of the programme could be quantified and evidenced. The evaluation, conducted by the Centre for Public Health Research (CPHR), had two strands as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

The first reports to be produced were focused on the implementation of the RESPECT programme. These provided timely information about the operation of the programme and indicated whether things were happening as planned.

The outcomes for young people were defined in terms of qualitative and quantitative indicators, the latter involving a 'before and after' study design to capture change at the individual level. Individual reports focussing on Option One, Option Two and *On the Streets* have been produced. The evaluation placed the impact of the RESPECT programme at the individual level within the theoretical construct of risk and protective factors and the development of resilience. A young person's involvement with the initiative could be viewed as a potential 'turning point', providing an opportunity for 'positive chain reactions' through the reduction of risk factors, an increase in protective factors and the development of resilience.

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**Figure 1.1 The structure of the evaluation and reports produced**



Impacts for the community and society were addressed in a report examining the economic evaluation of Option One of the programme, using Social Return on Investment.

The evaluation required ethical approval from the University of Chester's Faculty of Applied and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee. The first ethics application was submitted in January 2007. This application detailed the methodology that formed the cornerstone of the evaluation. Further successful applications were made to the ethics committee in June 2007, January and September 2008).

The evaluation employed a range of research tools, methods of data collection and analytical methodologies including:

- individual interviews and focus groups with young people and staff;
- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires completed by the young people who took up a place on the course;
- in-depth questionnaires completed by their support workers and teachers;
- the analysis of progress sheets that were maintained by staff;
- graduation surveys completed by parents and carers;
- observation of activities;

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- RESPECT referrals forms;
  - Social Return on Investment.



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## Chapter 2

### Key findings from the implementation evaluation

#### 2.1 Introduction

The data used to inform the implementation evaluation of the RESPECT programme were collected through a number of primary and secondary sources, including:

- attendance at a variety of groups and meetings;
- interviews with members of staff;
- questionnaires completed by referrers;
- interviews and focus groups with young people.

The timing of the implementation evaluation meant that the findings could be used to aid the development of the project.

#### 2.2 Three models of delivery

The first year of the RESPECT programme saw the emergence of three models of delivery that were distinctive in terms of their underpinning philosophy, location, content and duration. The different models developed because the partner organisations were allowed the freedom to develop projects based on their expertise, values and, in the case of *On the Streets*, local political agendas.

The key differences between the three major elements of the programme were identified as follows:

- the objectives of each element, particularly in relation to improving school attendance and reducing exclusions;
- the geographical location of the intervention, which could result in a differential impact across each area of Cheshire;
- the nature of the contact with the young people – whether it encompassed group and/or individual work, structured or unstructured, ‘disciplined’ or ‘informal’ contact;
- the extent to which the provision was targeted at specific individuals or was a universal service;

- 
- the duration of the work with a young person and the structure of any post-intervention support or contact;
  - the domains of a young person's life touched by the intervention – whether the work was solely with the individual or if there was contact with their family, school or with their peers and other people in their community.

Table 2.1. illustrates the differences between Option One, Option Two and *On the Streets*.

### **2.3 Interagency working**

The implementation of the RESPECT programme saw the development of structures and systems to support interagency governance and operational working.

The Governance Board was the overseeing and decision-making body for the RESPECT programme. During the first 18 months of the programme's operation, the range of agencies that were regularly represented on the Board and the degree of debate increased. One position on the Governance Board that was never filled was that of a representative of secondary school heads.

The chair of the Governance Board was the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. It was suggested in December 2007 that the position of Chair be rotated annually to facilitate the greater involvement of partners but a decision was made by the Board that it should remain with the lead authority. Standard items on the Governance Board agenda were as follows:

- an evaluation report;
- a review of the budget;
- the risk register;
- reports from Option One, Option Two and *On the Streets*.

In addition to the quarterly meetings, Governance Board members attended a workshop in March 2007 to identify risk factors and to define a set of performance indicators.

**Table 2.1 Characteristics of the major elements of the RESPECT programme**

	<b>Option One</b>	<b>Option Two</b>	<b><i>On the Streets</i></b>
<b>Targets</b>	To contribute to a reduction in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the number of hoax calls and small deliberate fires</li> <li>incidents of anti-social behaviour</li> <li>young people receiving fixed period or permanent exclusions</li> <li>unauthorised absences from school</li> <li>incidents of youth nuisance</li> <li>young people entering the criminal justice system</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To meet young people on the streets</li> <li>To develop positive activities which engage young people</li> <li>To develop participation and decision making skills so young people can be involved in their communities</li> </ul>
<b>Geography</b>	Cheshire and Warrington	Cheshire and Warrington	Halton
<b>Contact with young people</b>	Group sessions Structured Disciplined	Group and individual sessions Structured Informal	Group activities Informal
<b>Access</b>	Referral	Referral	Open access
<b>Duration of contact</b>	10 or 11 weeks	10 or 12 weeks	Up to 6 months
<b>Domains</b>	Individual School	Individual School	Individual Peers Community

The RESPECT programme was able to develop by utilising the range of skills and knowledge that the partners brought to each element of the programme. Staff from the education support team in particular shared their views and experiences with staff to facilitate the development of practices and procedures on Option One.

During the implementation evaluation, however, the potential for further interagency links more directly related to service delivery were identified by partners. This included the integration of some Fire Service activities into Option Two and the suggestion that

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Fire and Rescue Service staff, including fire fighters, could benefit from youth work training provided by the Youth Federation and the Youth Service. Resources were prioritised and time identified so that these developments could take place.

Whilst RESPECT was a partnership led by the Fire and Rescue Service, the three main elements of the programme were each led by different bodies: the Fire Service, Youth Federation, and Halton Youth Service. As a result of the degree of partnership working, decisions had to be made around which agency's procedures should be followed in areas such as risk assessments, parental consent and CRB checks.

A Practitioner Group was established as a forum for staff from all of the agencies involved in delivering or referring to the programme to meet and inform its development. Although the group met twice in the first six months of the programme's operation, it did not then meet again for more than a year. The Practitioners Group was re-instated because a number of operational staff said that they had found it a useful way to share information and experiences of the programme but only one further meeting was held. A lack of clarity about the role of the group and other pressures on staff time appeared to be the reasons for the irregularity of the meetings.

## **2.4 Staffing**

The Fire Service recruited staff from a variety of backgrounds to form the core RESPECT team. Supported by a project manager, up to seven youth support officers were responsible for delivering the Option One course and working with the *On the Streets* project. In addition, there was a school liaison officer who had a key role in publicising the programme and working with referrers to ensure that young people were directed to the appropriate Option and that contact was maintained between the referrer and programme before and during a young person's attendance.

The Youth Federation and Halton Youth Service employed staff directly to deliver their elements of the RESPECT programme. These staff were also involved in other aspects of their organisations' work.

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## 2.5 Start up time

Whilst Option One of the RESPECT programme took its first referrals during August 2006 and first ran a course from the following month, it took longer for Option Two and *On the Streets* to become operational.

The first Option One courses were based on an existing Fire Service programme and run by staff already employed within the Fire Service's youth engagement team. This meant that the first courses could start before the RESPECT facilitators were in post and that the Fire Service quickly had a product which could be publicised with descriptions of activities for referring agencies and young people.

The way that Option Two was going to operate and its role in relation to Option One took longer to be defined. In the early stages, the implementation evaluation found that Option One and Option Two needed to be more closely connected so that there was a clear and consistent description of the options and the referral pathways which could be communicated to referrers to inform their decision about the most appropriate provision for each young person.

Information about RESPECT was distributed by word of mouth, agency websites and a programme leaflet. During the first year, the RESPECT publicity was reproduced to ensure that it presented a picture of the programme as a whole, particularly for Cheshire and Warrington, rather than focusing on the individual elements as was the case in the first leaflet. The revised leaflet also clarified the differences between the more structured and disciplined approach of Option One and the informal education and support offered by Option Two.

The *OTS* project in Halton had its own timescales for implementation as the approach differed from the other parts of the programme and it had an additional funding stream. The development of *OTS* as an element of the RESPECT programme began after the submission of the initial *Invest to Save* bid and later delays in the project becoming fully operational were the result of a number of factors, including:

- the need for a more detailed service level agreement between the Fire Service and Halton Youth Service;
- further consideration of the risk assessment for Fire Service personnel undertaking the detached youth work;

- 
- planning the workload of the Option One course facilitators so they had the capacity to do the detached work.

When *OTS* was launched in February 2007, the detached work and organised sessions with young people took place with the involvement of one member of staff from the RESPECT team and over the following months, the level of involvement from the Option One staff increased.

## **2.6 Referral processes**

Option One and Option Two of the RESPECT programme were targeted interventions and as such, had procedures for referrals and the allocation of places. The processes that were put into place meant that the programme accepted rather than selected participants. Guidelines were established and referrers put forward young people for Option One or Option Two: all were allocated a place if there was one available – if there was not, the referrer was asked to prioritise which young people should attend.

There were a number of changes in the referral processes during the first year of operation and the findings of the implementation evaluation suggested further clarity was needed to ensure equal and equitable access. It was questioned whether referrers had adequate information about the different options, whether the young people who could benefit most from each intervention were being allocated a place and whether single school or single agency groups were being offered to the localities or groups in most need.

The evaluation suggested that if the programme was to achieve the greatest possible impact, places on Option One and Option Two needed to be allocated to those young people in Cheshire and Warrington who were most at risk and who could benefit most from the particular intervention. Only when the programme could ensure that all referrers had the same opportunity to refer to RESPECT, would it be in a position to make informed decisions about the allocation of resources if the demand for places was greater than the number available.

*OTS* operated in a different way from Option One and Option Two and, as a universal service, provided opportunities in which all young people aged between 13 and 19 years in a locality could take part. The focus of the project was on participation in activities and achieving accredited outcomes and although a reduction in anti-social

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behaviour, hoax calls, small deliberate fires, exclusions from school and increased school attendance might have been by-products of a greater level of participation in youth service and community activities, they were not explicit objectives of the project. Furthermore, when young people become involved, *OTS* would not know whether they had issues in these areas.

The universal nature of the *OTS* project and its broader objectives raised the question of whether the programme in Halton had the same focus on all of the RESPECT objectives as the other elements and, consequently, whether the impact of the RESPECT programme could be measured in an identical way across the three local authority areas.

## **2.7 Operational developments**

The implementation evaluation provided an opportunity to reflect on the developments within each element of the RESPECT programme. Some of the changes to Option One and Option Two occurred in response to requests from referrers or partner agencies (experimenting with a peer mentoring role, the provision of a mini-course, single school and service specific groups, such as the Youth Offending Team group, for example). A later addition to the programme was the facility for each participant to gain external accreditation.

The implementation evaluation suggested that the financial and/or operational implications of each new development needed to be systematically assessed by the programme staff. Whilst much was gained from these developments, issues were identified in relation to equitable access and maximising the use of resources to ensure that the young people who were referred attended and that they were the people who had the greatest potential to benefit from the programme.

*OTS* was designed to operate in a particular locality for a six month period before moving to a new area. Establishing the project in a new area and sustaining changes for young people when the project moved on were key to its development and impact. The impact evaluation of *OTS* illustrated how the project developed their mode of operation, working relationship with the Fire Service and exit strategy as they moved to each new area.

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Other changes in the content of the RESPECT programme took place to align the programme more closely with local strategies and all elements of *Every Child Matters*.



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## Chapter 3

### The young people who took part in the programme

#### 3.1 Option One

Between September 2006 and March 2009, 46 Option One courses were run. A total of 554 young people were allocated to these courses:

- 462 (83%) were male and 92 (17%) were female;
- the age of the young people ranged from 12 to 16 years;
- 26 young people were in Years 7 or 8 when they were allocated to a course;
- the largest year-group was Year 10 (205) – 166 were in Year 9 and 139 in Year 11;
- referrers stated that a quarter of the young people referred to Option One (136, 25%) had a disability or special needs;
- 405 (73%) young people were allocated to courses in Cheshire and 149 (27%) in Warrington.

The RESPECT referral form invited referrers to state whether the young person had needs relating to school attendance, basic social skills, self-esteem, behaviour management and learning. This data indicated that the highest priority for the largest number of young people was around behaviour management (399 referrals reported this as a high priority) and self-esteem (343 as a high priority).

The referral form also asked if the young people were known to have been involved in specific forms of offending, aggressive or anti-social behaviour. The responses showed that:

- more than two thirds (384, 69%) of the young people who were allocated a place were known to have behaved in an anti-social or aggressive manner;
- 108 (20%) of the young people had not been involved in offending, violent or anti-social behaviour: data were partially completed or missing for the remaining 62 young people referred to Option One.

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Table 3.1 illustrates the specific aggressive or anti-social behaviours that referrers knew that the young people they referred had displayed or been involved in. Verbal and/or physical aggression was an issue for the majority of the young people who were allocated a place on the Option One course.

**Table 3.1 Known behaviours of young people allocated a place on Option One**

<b>Known behaviour</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Verbal aggression	319	69
Physical aggression	228	51
Offending behaviour	193	46
Anti-social behaviour	172	42
Convictions	77	19
Fire setting	54	13
Dangerous driving	26	6
Hoax calls	17	4

The referral form asked the young person to give their thoughts about their involvement in the RESPECT programme and anything they found difficult about the school environment. An analysis of the information from the referral forms for the 2007 courses showed that the issues mentioned by the largest number of young people were difficulty with lessons at school, followed by problems with their behaviour or being in trouble, their level of concentration, anger issues and communicating or working with others.

Attendance records for the 554 young people referred to Option One showed that:

- 362 (65%) completed the course;
- 96 (17%) started the course but left before completion;
- 31 (7%) started the course but were removed by the referrer or the programme, usually as a result of poor behaviour;
- 65 (12%) were allocated a place but did not start an Option One course.

Looking at the people who completed the Option One course in greater detail showed the following:

- a similar proportion of boys and girls who were allocated a place on Option One completed the course (65%, 299 boys and 69%, 63 girls);
- as Table 3.2 illustrates, younger pupils were significantly more likely ( $p < 0.05$ ) than older pupils to complete Option One;
- 71% (95) of the young people with an identified disability or special need completed the course compared with 65% (224) of the young people who did not have an identified disability or special need;
- 70% (76) of the young people with no known aggressive or anti-social behaviours completed the Option One course compared with 63% (240) of the people where such behaviour was identified by referrers.

**Table 3.2. School year and Option One course completion category**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Non-starter</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Removed</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Left</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Year 7</b>	0	0	1	25	0	0	3	75	4
<b>Year 8</b>	1	5	1	5	5	23	15	68	22
<b>Year 9</b>	18	11	5	3	29	18	114	69	166
<b>Year 10</b>	23	11	12	6	36	18	134	65	205
<b>Year 11</b>	20	14	10	7	20	14	89	64	139
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>536</b>

### **3.2 Option Two**

Between May 2007 and March 2009, 16 Option Two courses were run. A total of 161 young people were allocated to these courses:

- 132 (82%) were male and 29 (18%) were female;
- the age of the young people ranged from 12 to 16 years;

- 
- the youngest people referred to Option Two (17) were in Year 8 when the course they were referred to started;
  - similar numbers of young people were in Year 9 (44) or 10 (50) – a smaller number (26) were in Year 11;
  - referrers stated that a fifth of the young people referred to Option Two (31,19%) had a disability or special need;
  - 120 (75%) young people were allocated to Option Two courses in Cheshire and 41 (25%) in Warrington.

Information in relation to offending, aggressive or anti-social behaviour from referrers showed that:

- just over half (82, 51%) of the young people who were allocated a place on Option Two were known to have behaved in an anti-social or aggressive manner;
- 31 (19%) of the young people had not been involved in offending, violent or anti-social behaviour: data were partially completed or missing for the remaining 48 (30%) young people referred to Option One.

Table 3.3 illustrates the specific aggressive or anti-social behaviours that referrers knew that the young people they referred to Option Two had displayed or been involved in. Verbal aggression was an issue for the majority of the young people who were allocated a place on the Option Two course.

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**Table 3.3 Known behaviours of young people allocated a place on Option Two**

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<b>Known behaviour</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Verbal aggression	67	69
Physical aggression	46	49
Offending behaviour	36	40
Anti-social behaviour	40	47
Convictions	8	9
Fire setting	16	18
Dangerous driving	6	7
Hoax calls	7	8

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Comments from young people, taken from the referral forms completed between May 2007 and April 2008, suggested that the areas that the largest number of young people felt they had difficulties with were lessons at school, poor relationships with teaching staff, getting into trouble, difficulties with concentration and problems controlling their anger.

Attendance records for the 161 young people referred to Option Two showed the following:

- 107 (67%) completed the course;
- 38 (24%) started the course but left before completion;
- 16 (10%) were allocated a place but did not start an Option Two course.

Looking at the people who completed the Option Two course in greater detail showed the following:

- a similar proportion of boys and girls who were allocated a place on Option One completed the course (67%, 89 boys and 62%, 18 girls);
- as Table 3.4 illustrates, the Year 11 pupils were significantly less likely to complete Option Two than young people from the other year groups;

- 79% (22) of the young people with an identified disability or special need completed the course compared with 72% (61) of the young people who did not have an identified disability or special needs;
- 84% (26) of the young people with no known aggressive or anti-social behaviours completed the Option Two course compared with 66% (54) of the people where such behaviour was identified by referrers.

**Table 3.4 School year and Option Two course completion category**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Non-starter</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Left</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Year 8</b>	0	0	3	18	14	82	17
<b>Year 9</b>	2	5	5	11	37	84	44
<b>Year 10</b>	3	6	11	22	36	72	50
<b>Year 11</b>	1	4	14	53	11	42	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>137</b>

### **3.3 On the Streets**

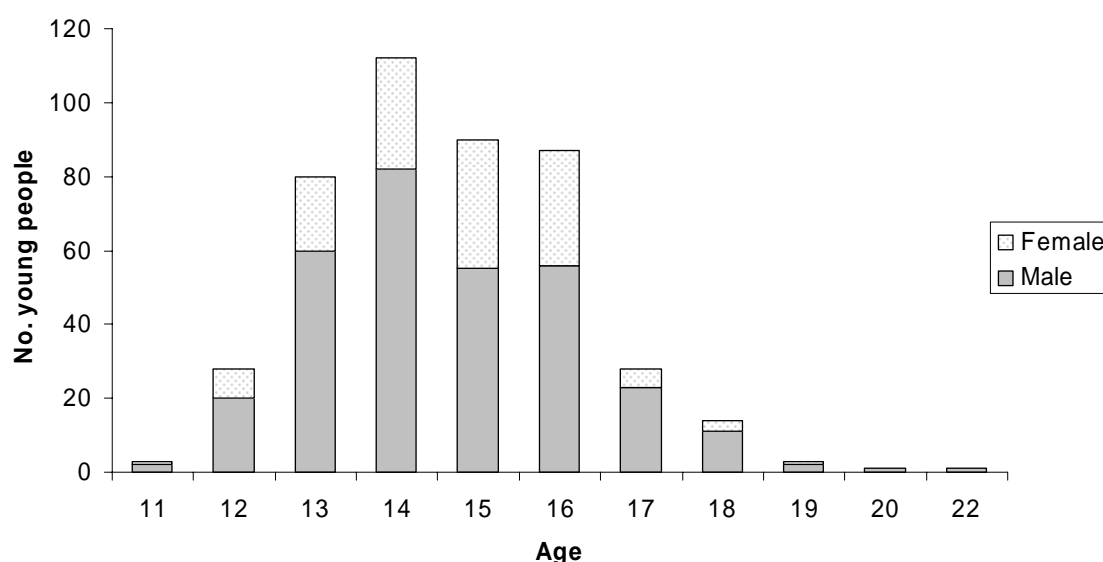
The data collected by the *OTS* team is stored on the Halton Youth Service's Electronic Youth Service (EYS) database. These data were used by the evaluators to present a profile of the young people in contact with *OTS*, their level of involvement, the activities attended and any recorded and accredited outcomes achieved. Anonymised data files for the Ditton and Halton Lodge areas were available.

Table 3.5 summarises the number of young people seen by the *OTS* team and the number of contacts recorded whilst the project was in each area. It shows that whilst there were a smaller number of young people involved with *OTS* in Halton Lodge than in Ditton, the average number of contacts per person was higher (5.1 in Halton Lodge compared with 3.8 in Ditton). Whilst the number of contacts a young person had with the *OTS* project ranged from 1 to 48, three fifths of the young people (266, 60%) had one or two contacts with *OTS* whilst they were working in Ditton or Halton Brook.

**Table 3.5 Contact with OTS**

	No. young people	No. contacts	% with 1 or 2 contacts
Ditton (Feb to Sept 2007)	329	1,244	203 (62%)
Halton Lodge (Oct 2007 to Apr 2008)	120	612	63 (52%)
Hough Green (May to Sept 2008)	106	485	58 (55%)
Appleton (Jan to Jun 2009)	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available

The age of the young people seen by the OTS team ranged from 12 to 22 years old, a wider range than the other elements of the RESPECT programme. Figure 3.1 illustrates that 70% of the young people who had contact with the OTS team were male and 83% of all young people in contact with the project in Ditton and Halton Lodge were aged between 13 and 16 years old.

**Figure 3.1 Age and sex of OTS participants in Ditton and Halton Lodge**

OTS came into contact with a larger number of young men in the Ditton areas (possibly a result of the Friday night football session being a very popular activity). In Halton Lodge, whilst there were still more young men in contact with the project, a higher proportion of young women were involved (74% of young people in contact with OTS in

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Ditton were male compared with 58.5% in Halton Lodge). The age profile of the young people engaging with *OTS* in each area was similar.



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## Chapter 4

### The impact evaluation of Option One and Option Two

#### 4.1 Introduction

Although the impact evaluations of Option One and Option Two were undertaken as two separate exercises, the research tools that were used were largely the same and some common themes emerged. Specific differences between Option One and Option Two are highlighted at the end of this section of the report.

#### 4.2 Engagement with the course

The young person's engagement with Option One and Option Two was a process that began before the referral was made and continued to the end of the course. The programme could only have an impact if the participants were physically present and actively engaged.

The research showed that participants appreciated the opportunity to meet at least one member of staff who would be running the course before they started:

- some young people said this had helped them to think about why they had been referred to the RESPECT programme and what they could gain from attending the course;
- others said that they felt more confident about attending, knowing more about the course and the people who'd be running it.

On Option One, just over two-thirds (68%) of the participants who completed the course attended every session or only had authorised absences. The attendance figures were higher on Option Two (94%) where young people were collected from school or home in a mini-bus. Overall, 65% (362) of the people who started Option One completed it and 67% (107) completed Option Two.

Whilst on the RESPECT programme, the picture was predominantly of young people getting involved and learning, although there was evidence that some participants sometimes struggled with activities or had disagreements with staff or their peers. The process of engagement on Option One can be illustrated by the weekly reports. They

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showed that whilst a quarter of the participants were confident from the start and positive throughout the course, the progress made by most required students to overcome their own inhibitions or challenging behaviours.

The timing of the referral, realistic expectations and preparation were found to be key factors in the early engagement of participants, early engagement that maximised the chances of a young person feeling able to take up a place, being ready to participate and successfully complete the course. Transport to the course was also found to be an important feature of Option Two.

The reasons given for not starting or withdrawing from the programme were varied and included:

- a dislike of the activities, particularly on the Option One course;
- relationships with other participants;
- some people were facing personal issues that were overwhelming;
- others expressed a preference for alternatives, such as work placements, that were offered to them.

In a number of instances, pupils were withdrawn by teachers following particular incidents of poor behaviour at school and a small number of young people were dismissed from the course as a result of poor, often unsafe, behaviour.

#### **4.3 Positive outcomes for young people**

Information collected from stakeholders during the evaluation suggested that there had been changes in the attitude and behaviour of many young people who completed the courses: this may have been demonstrated at home, at school or with their peers in the community. In different environments, Options One and Two presented young people with an opportunity to build positive relationships with a new set of people, both adults and peers, and to take part in, and learn from, new and challenging activities. Some of the positive outcomes, illustrated with comments from young people, teachers and other support workers are described below.

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#### 4.3.1 Relationships with staff

The majority of the participants were very positive about the relationships they had built with the members of staff who ran the Option One and Option Two courses. They spoke about the way that staff treated them *'like an equal'*, helped them to talk, listened to what they said and let them make decisions.

A number of people said that they had learnt from the way that staff interacted with them. This quotation illustrates the way that the young people acknowledged and responded to the positive manner of the staff:

*'We've seen [RESPECT worker's name] treat us like we want to be treated so we should treat other people like that.'*

It was not that the staff did not place demands on the participants. As one teacher commented: *'he saw that standards expected in school also relate to the real world'*, but that on the course, the young people understood the reasons for the rules and boundaries that were set and they responded to the positive attitude of the staff.

#### 4.3.2 Working as part of a team

Conversations during the focus groups and interviews with young people showed that some of the participants had reflected on the role of communication and teamwork whilst they were on the course.

Participants talked positively about working with their peers and some had begun to think about the importance of how they communicated with each other.

The impact was also acknowledged by teachers and support staff, one teacher saying that a pupil had felt valued as a team member on the programme and, as a result of the experience, her confidence with her peer group had improved. Another teacher said that following of one boy's attendance on Option One:

*'The pupil has changed from a pupil with the potential to be excluded to a really positive role model for his peers ... (the) team building activities taught him to respect his peers and to do it in such a high profile organization mattered to him. This improved all aspects of his attitude and kept him in school.'*

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### 4.3.3 Enjoying and achieving

During the research, participants spoke about the course activities that they had enjoyed and, along with teachers and support workers, referred to a growth in confidence that had resulted from their achievements on the RESPECT programme.

Students spoke about pushing themselves further than they thought they could and the realisation that, as one boy said, *'I can actually do stuff'*. Others spoke about particular activities that had encouraged them to think that they could do things when they set their mind to it. One student suggested that he been invigorated by the things he had done on Option Two and that it had changed his outlook:

*'I don't know what it is; it just gives you more energy. I feel like I can do more stuff ... I used to be lazy, but I'm not as lazy anymore.'*

Some of the Option One students spoke about their preparation for the graduation day and the response of other people in terms of pride in their attendance and achievements. One person commented:

*'It made you feel proud of yourself because you had actually done something that has made people proud of you. It was a nice feeling.'*

Following the RESPECT programme, some young people had got involved in new activities outside school. The most frequently mentioned activity following the Option One course was the fire cadets, which had been running from Cheshire fire stations since 1992.

Teachers and support workers also spoke about students who were previously disengaged now undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh Award or helping at school clubs and participants mentioned a range of sports and leisure activities they had become involved with. A teacher commented in the following way on the wider impact of the programme for one pupil:

*'The RESPECT programme has had a knock on effect in engaging the student and motivating him to take part in other activities and school work.'*

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#### 4.3.4 Actions and consequences

Information gained from the young people suggested that many of the messages from the RESPECT programme had made them think in a different way about the consequences of their behaviour, both the impact upon themselves and on other people.

In focus groups and interviews at the end of Option One, participants spoke about changes in their behaviour in relation to fire setting and hoax calls. One person said, for example: *'I used to go out and start fires for a laugh but I don't do that anymore ... we know what it's like now.'*

Their understanding of the work of fire fighters had resulted in the development of respect for the job – another person said: *'They're putting their own lives at risk ... it's made us realise what can happen just from a little fire.'* Family members, teachers and support workers commented on the participants' heightened awareness of fire safety and that this knowledge had frequently been passed on to other people.

The message had also been received in relation to other unsafe behaviours. Some people said that the road traffic collision session, in particular, had influenced the way they perceived the behaviour of others and the way that they behaved themselves. Staff also commented on the level of engagement of the participants during the sessions on drugs and alcohol, and in the focus groups, the young people also spoke about their impact.

One person said the following when talking about the change in his behaviour when he was with his friends:

*"If we hadn't come here, we'd go out and do stuff and not know what might happen. When you come here you know what's going to happen, like the consequences and stuff like that ... I don't know, I'm just different with them. Like, if I didn't come here I'd just like be messing about all the time ... We think about the consequences and stuff like that now."*

The evaluation of Option Two highlighted the ways in which the course had encouraged participants to reflect upon their behaviour, particularly in relation to school. One participant, for example, said that he now understood that his attitude towards others had a direct impact upon his experience of school, realising that *'it would work out better'* if he was more co-operative.

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There were also a number of extensive conversations during the focus groups which suggested that the things they had learnt on Option Two had enabled participants to adopt new strategies for dealing with situations that had been problematic in the past, such as when they felt challenged or angry.

#### **4.3.5 Broadening horizons and thinking about the future**

Parents, teachers, support workers and participants all spoke about the way that Option One and Option Two had encouraged students to think about their education and their future. In some cases, this was because they were now motivated by a particular goal, such as becoming a fire fighter or doing a college course but more frequently it was because they felt more positive or had a different perception of what they were able to achieve.

This is illustrated by one referrer who said: *'it's the first time he has seen anything through to completion. He now has plans (that are achievable) for the future'*. Similarly, another referrer commented on the unique effect of Option One for one pupil, saying:

*'This student has only engaged with RESPECT and nothing else on offer. The impact on him has been good and given him the confidence to move on.'*

Students also said that it had made them think about the future – one 15 year old, for example, who wanted to put his school days behind him, suggested that Option Two had made him think differently about his remaining time in education. He said:

*'I've started listening more in class now 'cos I realise that it's your last year ... so you just gotta like get your head down, 'cos this month could determine the rest of your life, couldn't it?'*

#### **4.4 Limitations on the impact of Option One and Option Two**

The research evidence, however, confirms that the courses had less of an impact upon some participants than the referrers and the RESPECT programme would have hoped. This was the result of a number of factors.

##### **4.4.1 The timing of the referral**

The first is whether the RESPECT programme came at the right time for the individual – that is, whether the young person was at a point when they were able to benefit from taking part in a programme such as this.

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A small number of referrers, for example, and one young person said that the course had come too late. The pupil said that his issue was with his attendance at school and he had already '*sorted it out*' whilst other referrers suggested there had not been positive changes because the behaviours of some young people were too entrenched.

#### **4.4.2 The length and content of the course**

There was a suggestion from some referrers that a 10 or 11 week course was not long enough to '*embed the values and objectives*' that the RESPECT programme was promoting. These workers suggested that a longer course was needed for some pupils to ensure that any or all of the positive changes that occurred whilst they were attending the course could be maintained afterwards.

In relation to Option One in particular, the style of the course and activities were an issue for a small number of participants. In some cases this resulted in them not starting or leaving the course whilst in others, they were reluctant to take part in specific activities such as the tent building and water safety tasks.

#### **4.4.3 Personal issues and deep-seated needs**

The entrenched difficulties of some of the young people or issues which arose during or shortly after their attendance on the RESPECT programme appeared to have made it difficult for them to make or maintain positive changes. Information from teachers and support workers suggested that these factors included unstable relationships at home, drug abuse, mental health issues and, on occasions, the perceived '*unwillingness*' on the part of a young person to change.

#### **4.4.4 Peer pressures**

Peer-related issues were cited as the reason for some participants maintaining or slipping back into poor behaviours. It was suggested by teachers and support workers that some of the young people who had attended the programme found it difficult to resist negative peer pressures when they returned to familiar situations. There were a few comments that suggested young people had made changes in their peer groups since they had been on the course.

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#### **4.4.5 Transferring learning from the course**

The research found that even when participants had taken on board messages from the Option One and Option Two courses, some had difficulty in transferring the learning to other situations, whether this was at home, at school or in the community. This point was explicitly made by two school staff who completed questionnaires for six young people who had attended Option Two. They said:

*'Pupils did not make the link between what they were discussing on the course and poor behaviour in school.'*

One participant, who was generally positive about the Option One course, expressed this separation by saying *'it will change your behaviour but it won't change your school life'*.

#### **4.5 The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire**

On reviewing the available tools, it was decided to use Youth in Mind's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, 2005) with the young people involved in Option One and Option Two of the RESPECT programme.

The SDQ is a validated tool that measures emotional and behavioural strengths and difficulties in children and adolescents (Goodman, 1997). The version of the SDQ which was used as part of the RESPECT evaluation was designed for young people aged 11 to 16 years old. It comprises two self-completion questionnaires, one to be completed before an intervention and one at its conclusion. The tool has five scales (emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems and pro-social behaviour) and five statements in each scale. There is also an impact supplement which was used as part of the RESPECT evaluation.

For each statement, the respondent has to state whether it is not true, somewhat true or completely true. The completed SDQ allows a total difficulties score to be calculated (this excludes the pro-social scale) and a score for each of the five scales. The score can place the individual in a normal, borderline or abnormal category with pre-determined bands. The impact supplement asks whether difficulties upset or distress the young person and whether they interfere with home life, friendships, classroom learning and leisure interests. As with the total difficulties score, the impact score can be used as a continuous variable or classified into three bands – normal, borderline or abnormal.



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Pre- and post-course SDQ questionnaires were available for 335 young people (69% of those who completed the Option One and 77% of those who completed the Option Two courses). A statistical analysis of these responses, showed that there was a small but statistically significant improvement in the total SDQ score for the young people who completed Option One and Option Two ( $p=0.049$ ). An analysis by sex did not reveal a statistically significant change for either boys ( $p=0.053$ ) or girls ( $p=0.0595$ ). Overall, there were significant changes observed within the conduct sub-scale ( $p=0.014$ ) and hyperactivity sub-scale ( $p=0.002$ ).

The evaluators considered why the SDQ may not have indicated a greater degree of change for the young people. Possible reasons may be that the Option One and Option Two courses did not impact upon the areas covered by the emotional and peer problems scales in particular, or it may have been that the time between the completion of the pre- and post- questionnaires was too short (10 or 11 weeks). Anecdotal evidence also suggests that some questionnaires were not accurately completed by a proportion of the respondents, particularly the pre-intervention questionnaire completed on the first day as part of the course induction.

#### **4.6 Differences between Option One and Option Two**

There were many similarities in the type of outcomes from the young people attending the Option One and Option Two courses, as illustrated above. A key feature of the programme was that referrers had the choice between the different styles of provision so that the young people could participate in the option that was most appropriate for them.

Broadly, there appeared to be three key differences in the outcomes for the young people on the Option One and Option Two course.

- Participants on Option Two were more likely to attend each session and complete the course during the first 18 months of the programme. The fact that young people were picked up from school or home appeared to have made a key difference. This practice, however, has clear resource implications, in terms of staff time and transport costs and in the later stages of the programme, when the Youth Federation had some issues with transport, attendance levels fell. The Youth Federation were positive about the practice of providing transport for participants and suggested that picking up people from their homes rather than school might

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have improved attendance further and have a positive impact on developing one-to-one relationships with the youth worker who was driving the mini-bus.

- Safety and accident prevention, particularly in relation to fire and traffic, were more prominent topics on the Option One course. The interviews with young people showed that this element of the course resulted in a considerable amount of reflection about their behaviour and the behaviour of others. For some people, it also sparked an ambition to work in the public services, particularly the fire and rescue service. The Option One course provided a route into fire cadets for interested young people, enabling them to continue their engagement with the service and to develop their skills.
- The ability to transfer skills to other situations, at school or when they were with their peers, and to use the information gained on the course, was essential. During one-to-one interviews, the young people who completed Option Two spoke in greater detail about the ways in which they were able to apply what they had learnt, suggesting that this had been a larger feature of this part of the RESPECT programme.

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## Chapter 5

### The impact of *On the Streets*

#### 5.1 Introduction

The impact evaluation of *On the Streets* (OTS) was focused on the Halton Lodge area, the second locality in which the team was based. The evaluation found that during the six months that OTS was in this area, the underlying philosophy of the project was refined and developments in its organisational structures facilitated the joint working between the Youth Service and the Fire Service.

Whilst in the area, the project had engaged with young people and the wider community, overcoming a number of barriers in the process. Young people who took up the opportunities offered by OTS got involved in activities that they enjoyed, that broadened their outlook or range of experiences, and in some cases, allowed them to gain recognised qualifications. It was apparent that the activities offered by OTS were seen by young people as an alternative to boredom and/or involvement in antisocial behaviour.

#### 5.2 Positive outcomes for young people

Information collected from stakeholders suggested that there had been changes for young people who became involved in OTS projects. Some of the positive outcomes, illustrated with comments from young people, teachers and other support workers are described below.

##### 5.2.1 Opportunities to achieve and enjoy

Young people said that they enjoyed the OTS activities they attended. Participants reported that they '*had a laugh*' and '*looked forward*' to sessions each week. The activities that young people said they would like to see in their area reflected many of those provided by OTS. For example, several young people reported that they wanted greater access to the youth room within the community centre and when asked what she would organise for young people in her area, one young person said: '*I'd probably choose all the activities that they did*'.

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It appears that one reason the *OTS* activities were popular was that previously there had been little for young people to do locally. One person said that before the project came to the area, *'all we did was sit on a street and it was boring – it gave us something to do'*. Adults in the locality supported this view and perceived that *OTS* had improved the availability of activities for young people in the area.

Some *OTS* activities provided opportunities for the young people to achieve either an accredited outcome, such as a stage of the Duke of Edinburgh award or an AQA award, or a Youth Service recorded outcome. One member of staff commented on the positive impact of the accreditation:

*'It gives anyone a sense of achievement to see something through and get a certificate at the end of it and a celebration. They were all made up and got their pictures took and it was put in the paper.'*

The findings suggested that the *OTS* project resulted in some young people feeling more positive about themselves and their peer group as one young person explained:

*'... we are not the best of groups to be involved with. But once [the OTS team] came round we all started to get to talk to them we found out our area is better then we actually thought and that our groups can be nicer people.'*

### **5.2.2 Broadening horizons**

There was some evidence that the young people who participated in *OTS* activities had developed interests which would broaden their horizons. Many young people had been given the opportunity to learn about and try new things, and in many instances, these experiences engaged young people with activities that might improve their skills or benefit their career. *OTS* staff also described the way in which activities were designed to develop a wider awareness, using, for example, events such as International Women's Day and Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender History Month to provide information and instigate discussion about issues such as sexuality and sexual identity.

Contact with *OTS* had also encouraged a number of young people to get involved in community activities including:

- fire cadets;
- the Young Leaders Group;
- the Youth Council;

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- applications to the Youth Bank;
  - the community centre committee.

An adult involved with the community centre reported that the young people's participation was *'going really well'*. There was some evidence to suggest that the young people were now more aware that they needed to take responsibility for their own social time as a result of their contact with OTS and these later developments, saying *'we've got to think of things to do really'*.

### **5.2.3 Improved relationships with the wider community**

There was evidence that the OTS project's aim of improving relationships between young people and the wider community had been achieved. The team had facilitated communication with the community centre to promote the 'youth room', a move which had improved interaction between the adults who ran the centre and the young people who had started to use it. Young people had also joined the community centre committee which was perceived by those involved to have given it *'another perspective'*. The integration achieved was seen as a positive step because it challenged the adults' perspectives of young people as one external stakeholder explained:

*'I think [OTS] encouraged some inter-generational working where the young people were accessing the community centre, because they have never done that before. I think people were starting to see the young people as part of the community and not just as a nuisance.'*

Members of the community were more aware that work with young people could have a broader impact. One external stakeholder said: *'it's definitely had a positive outcome 'cos it's highlighted how a positive intervention for young people in the area can benefit the whole community'*. OTS had also forged links between the local fire station staff and the young people through *On the Station*. Several young people had maintained their involvement through the fire cadets and OTS staff perceived that relations between fire fighters and young people in the area had improved as a result of links that had been made.

### **5.2.4 Actions and consequences**

The evaluation found that the interaction between the young people and the OTS staff had helped young people think about the reasons for their behaviour and the impact of

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their actions. Several people referred to conversations with *OTS* staff about sexual health and contraception, and some young people had registered for a C:card, a scheme which enabled young people to get condoms and access information about safe sex. Staff had also talked to young people about the consequences of lighting fires. These discussions had taken place both on the streets, where young people had been attempting to start fires, and at *On the Station*, where messages had been reinforced.

A number of young people who took part in the evaluation reported that their participation with *OTS* had prevented their involvement in antisocial behaviour. One young person expressed this by saying that he would otherwise have been *'sitting bored and I'll end up doing stuff that people don't want me to do really'*. Others perceived that *OTS* had diverted them from negative behaviour which could have had serious consequences with the law. One young person said that he might have received an ASBO if he had not been involved with the project, while another explained that the activities had kept her out of trouble:

*'They sort of kept us out of the bad things that we do, or had done and they took us away from it in a way ... 'cos it got a lot of us off the streets ... 'cos we weren't a particularly nice group of people, we had trouble with the police and everything ... but it calmed down a lot 'cos we've been out of the way.'*

### **5.3 Sustainability when *On the Streets* moves on**

During the time that *OTS* was in the area there were positive changes for the young people and within the wider community that could be attributed to the work of the project. And after the project had left, some young people had continued to attend sports sessions and others were taking part in community activities. The question was whether the six months that *OTS* was in the area was long enough to build strong links within the local community, to influence local providers, and for enough young people to continue their engagement without the support and encouragement of the *OTS* team.

There was a perception amongst stakeholders including the young people interviewed that there was less to do in the area since the *OTS* team had left. Local stakeholders, in particular, perceived it to be a problem that the young people's expectations regarding youth provisions had been raised and that young people may have been

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feeling '*let down*' after the team left. There was also a certain amount of concern about the outcome of the ensuing '*disappointment*' about their departure.

These concerns suggested that the changes that had taken place were fragile and that, post-intervention, the atmosphere was less positive. Although local organisations had stepped in, providing some activities and applying for funding, there was a perception that the area had lost something that was valued and that it had not, to date, been replaced.

On an individual level, it is difficult to say whether each young person's personal development had been sustained or whether they had been able to transfer the positive experiences with the *OTS* project to other situations, such as school or in thinking about their future. Sustained change was, however, easier to identify for those people who had joined the fire cadets: from the time that *OTS* left the area, they were keyed into an organisation that was able to offer some of the things that had been provided by the project, such as positive relationships with adults, enjoyable activities, opportunities to take responsibility, understanding the consequences of their actions, and so on.

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## Chapter 6

### Outcomes for the community

#### 6.1 Introduction

The RESPECT programme set out to contribute to a reduction in

- the number of hoax calls and deliberate small fires;
- young people receiving fixed period or permanent exclusions;
- unauthorised absences from school;
- incidents of youth nuisance or anti-social behaviour;
- young people entering the criminal justice system.

The local trends in these community level indicators over the last three or four years are illustrated in Table 6.1 below. The baseline year is the last complete year before the RESPECT programme became operational in September 2006.

The figures show an inconclusive picture of increases and decreases in the key statistics, trends which will have been affected by changes in policy and practice and other factors such as the weather. The overall trend for each dataset was as follows:

- a reduction in the number of hoax calls;
- a reduction in the number of deliberate small fires;
- incidents of anti-social behaviour rose steeply in the first year but have shown little change since then;
- increases in unauthorised absences from school;
- offences committed by young people decreased in Halton and Warrington – in Cheshire the pattern was more varied with an increase in the first two years and a reduction in year 3.

Data on fixed period and permanent exclusions is currently available for two of the four years and so a trend cannot be defined.



**Table 6.1 Community indicators for the pre-programme baseline and RESPECT**

Indicator	Data source	Baseline (2005-06)	Year 1 (2006-07)	Year 2 (2007-08)	Year 3 (2008-09)
Small deliberate fires	Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service	Number of malicious secondary fires: 3751 (25% of all calls)	Number of malicious secondary fires: 3822 (26% of all calls)  This equates to a 2% increase in malicious secondary fires from the previous year.	Number of malicious secondary fires: 2881 (23% of all calls)  This equates to a 25% reduction in malicious secondary fires from the previous year.	Number of malicious secondary fires: 2216 (20% of all calls)  This equates to a 23% reduction in malicious secondary fires from the previous year.
Hoax calls	Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service	Number of hoax calls attended: 463 (3% of all calls)  In addition, 314 hoax calls were unattended.	Number of hoax calls attended: 350 (2% of all calls)  In addition, 285 hoax calls were unattended.  This equates to a 19% reduction in hoax calls from the previous year.	Number of hoax calls attended: 261 (2% of all calls)  In addition, 304 hoax calls were unattended.  This equates to an 11% reduction in hoax calls from the previous year.	Number of hoax calls attended: 219 (2% of all calls)  In addition, 213 hoax calls were unattended.  This equates to a 24% reduction in hoax calls from the previous year.
Youth related anti-social behaviour	Cheshire Police	Baseline figure not available	Number of anti-social behaviour incidents involving young people: 25895	Number of anti-social behaviour incidents involving young people: 26402  This equates to a 2% increase from the previous year	Number of anti-social behaviour incidents involving young people: 25129  This equates to a 5% decrease from the previous year

Indicator	Data source	Baseline (2005-06)	Year 1 (2006-07)	Year 2 (2007-08)	Year 3 (2008-09)
Half days missed through unauthorised absences in maintained secondary schools	Department for Children, Schools and Families website	England average for unauthorised absence: 1.22% <b>Cheshire</b> 1.04% half days <b>Halton</b> 1.87% half days <b>Warrington</b> 1.10% half days	England average for unauthorised absence: 1.50% <b>Cheshire</b> 1.31% half days <b>Halton</b> 2.10 % half days <b>Warrington</b> 1.31% half days  Change from the previous year: Cheshire +26% Halton +12% Warrington +19%	England average for unauthorised absence: 1.47% <b>Cheshire</b> 1.37% half days <b>Halton</b> 2.26% half days <b>Warrington</b> 1.22% half days  Change from the previous year: Cheshire +5% Halton +8% Warrington -7%	Data not yet available
Fixed period exclusions from school	Department for Children, Schools and Families website	<b>Cheshire</b> 4761 <b>Halton</b> 623 <b>Warrington</b> 1572	<b>Cheshire</b> 5398 <b>Halton</b> 562 <b>Warrington</b> 1638  Change from the previous year: Cheshire +13% Halton -10% Warrington +4%	<b>Cheshire</b> 5520 <b>Halton</b> 630 <b>Warrington</b> 1390  Change from the previous year: Cheshire +2% Halton +12% Warrington -15%	Data not yet available
Permanent exclusions from school	Department for Children, Schools and Families website	<b>Cheshire</b> 135 <b>Halton</b> 33 <b>Warrington</b> 26	<b>Cheshire</b> 101 <b>Halton</b> 23 <b>Warrington</b> 19	<b>Cheshire</b> 70 <b>Halton</b> 20 <b>Warrington</b> 20	Data not yet available

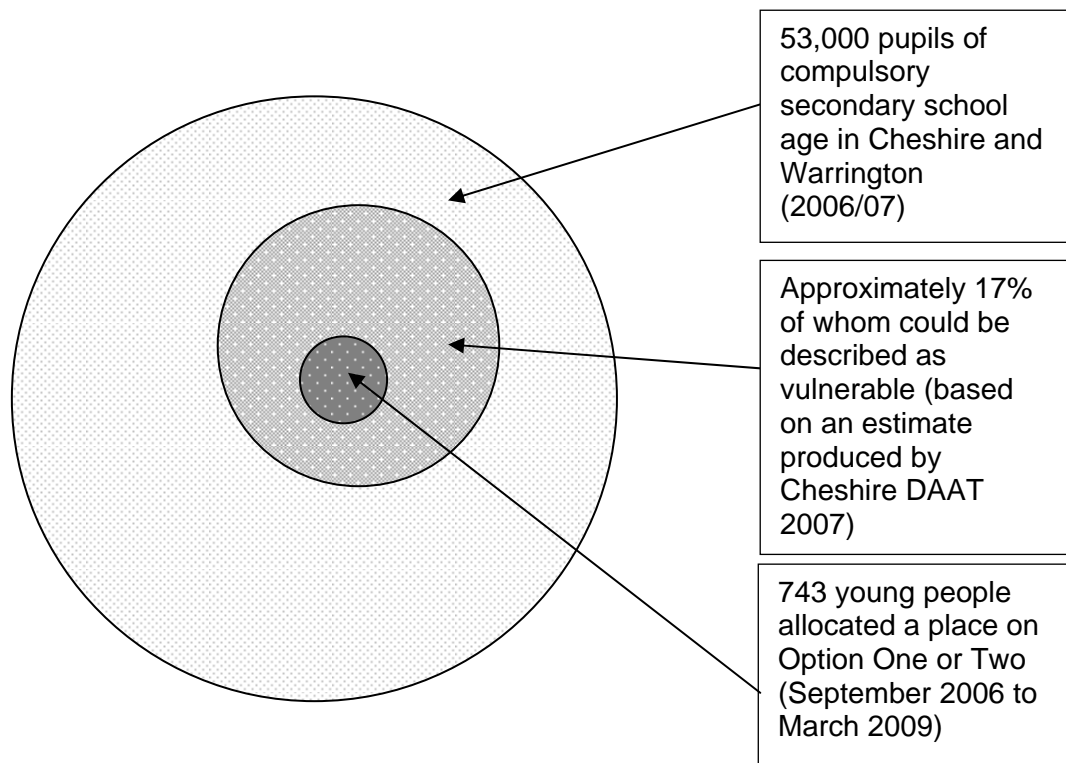
Indicator	Data source	Baseline (2005-06)	Year 1 (2006-07)	Year 2 (2007-08)	Year 3 (2008-09)
Permanent exclusions from school (cont)			Change from the previous year: Cheshire -25% Halton -30% Warrington -26%	Change from the previous year: Cheshire -31% Halton -13% Warrington +5%	
Youth crime	Youth Offending Teams for Cheshire, Halton and Warrington	<p><b>Cheshire</b> Number of offences committed by young people aged 11 to 17 years: 4229</p> <p>Male: 3325 (79%) Female: 904 (21%)</p> <p><b>Halton/Warrington</b> Number of offences committed by young people aged 11 to 17 years: 1886</p> <p>Male: 1529 (81%) Female: 357 (19%)</p>	<p><b>Cheshire</b> Number of offences committed by young people aged 11 to 17 years: 4628</p> <p>Male: 3773 (82%) Female: 845 (18%)</p> <p>This equates to an increase of 9% from the previous year.</p> <p><b>Halton/Warrington</b> Number of offences committed by young people aged 11 to 17 years: 1869</p> <p>Male: 1554 (83%) Female: 315 (17%)</p> <p>This equates to a decrease of 1% from the previous year.</p>	<p><b>Cheshire</b> Number of offences committed by young people aged 11 to 17 years: 5272</p> <p>Male: 4406 (84%) Female: 866 (16%)</p> <p>This equates to an increase of 14% from the previous year.</p> <p><b>Halton/Warrington</b> Number of offences committed by young people aged 11 to 17 years: 1496</p> <p>Male: 1211 (81%) Female: 285 (19%)</p> <p>This equates to a decrease of 20% from the previous year.</p>	<p><b>Cheshire</b> Number of offences committed by young people aged 11 to 17 years: 4265</p> <p>Male: 3475 (81%) Female: 790 (19%)</p> <p>This equates to a reduction of 19% from the previous year.</p> <p><b>Halton/Warrington</b> Number of offences committed by young people aged 11 to 17 years: 1331</p> <p>Male: 1044 (78.4%) Female: 287 (21.6%)</p> <p>This equates to a decrease of 11% from the previous year.</p>

Indicator	Data source	Baseline (2005-06)	Year 1 (2006-07)	Year 2 (2007-08)	Year 3 (2008-09)
NEET data for 16 and 17 year olds	<p>Data for Cheshire and Warrington for 2005-2008 from Connexions.</p> <p>Data for Halton 2005-2007 supplied in response to House of Commons question, Hansard Written Answers for February 2008</p> <p>Data for Halton for 2008 from Connexions.</p>	<p>16 and 17 year olds not in education, employment or training December 2005</p> <p><b>Cheshire</b> 646</p> <p><b>Halton</b> 260 (9.4%)</p> <p><b>Warrington</b> 225</p>	<p>16 and 17 year olds not in education, employment or training December 2006</p> <p><b>Cheshire</b> 608</p> <p><b>Halton</b> 290 (10.7%)</p> <p><b>Warrington</b> 218</p> <p>Change from the previous year: Cheshire -5.9% Halton +12% Warrington -3.1%</p>	<p>16 and 17 year olds not in education, employment or training December 2007</p> <p><b>Cheshire</b> 583</p> <p><b>Halton</b> 270 (10.1%)</p> <p><b>Warrington</b> 184</p> <p>Change from the previous year: Cheshire -4.1% Halton -7% Warrington -15.6%</p>	<p>16 and 17 year olds not in education, employment or training December 2008</p> <p><b>Cheshire</b> 703 (5.0%)</p> <p><b>Halton</b> 280 (11.3%)</p> <p><b>Warrington</b> 238 (6.1%)</p> <p>Change from the previous year: Cheshire +20.1% Halton +4% Warrington +29.3%</p>

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The area based statistics provide some background to changes within the local area but they must be viewed alongside the scope of the RESPECT programme if they are to be linked. As the programme operates differently in Halton, Figure 6.1 illustrates the situation in Cheshire and Warrington where Option One and Option Two operate across the whole geographical area (based on an estimate produced by Cheshire DAAT, 2007).

**Figure 6.1 Reach of Option One and Two in Cheshire and Warrington**



Whilst the numbers allocated a place on the Option One and Option two courses is a considerable number, it is impossible to translate directly the impact for these individuals into a cumulative impact via changes in the community level indicators described above.

The evaluators therefore sought a more sensitive way to make the link between the impact of the programme upon individual participants and benefits to wider society.

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## **6.2 Social return on investment**

The chosen solution was to use a method developed from an American model in the UK by the new economics foundation (nef) – Social Return on Investment (SROI). This methodology was applied to the evaluation of Option One, the most resource intensive element of the RESPECT programme.

SROI is an approach that has been developed from cost-benefit analysis, social accounting and social auditing. It is described as a process that can be used to understand, measure and report on the social, environmental and economic value that is being created by an organisation.

SROI provided a framework which enabled the evaluators of the RESPECT programme to explore the range of outcomes occurring as a result of Option One courses and convert these outcomes, including those that are not easily measurable, into tangible monetary values. So, when viewed alongside the inputs, the benefits of Option One could be seen in terms of the 'return' not only for the course participant but also more generally, for the wider community or society.

The SROI analysis followed the guidance issued by the new economic foundation (Lawlor et al., 2008). This required the evaluators to:

- identify those who were most involved in Option One (the key stakeholders);
- describe what the stakeholders wanted to achieve as a result of their participation (their objectives);
- calculate the resources utilised by Option One (the inputs) and describe what it provided with those resources (the activities);
- show how this led to direct results (outputs) and longer term consequences (outcomes);
- identify the outcomes that Option One can take credit for (impacts) and attach financial values to them (proxies) to calculate the social return.

## **6.3 Key stakeholders**

The stakeholders were the people who influenced Option One or who were most affected by it. In year two of the RESPECT programme, the key stakeholders were:

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- 177 young people who took up a place on an Option One course;
  - their parents;
  - schools and support workers who referred the young people;
  - Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service;
  - Cheshire Police;
  - Cheshire County Council;
  - Warrington Borough Council;
  - the local community
  - Central Government.

#### **6.4 Some objectives**

The analysis needs to capture the things that these people and agencies wanted from their involvement with Option One.

The evaluators were aware of the broad objectives of each of the stakeholder groups through primary research, RESPECT paperwork and policy documentation. Some objectives were shared by more than one of the stakeholders whilst others were specific to a particular group. Some of the key objectives that were identified were as follows:

- teachers, support workers and young people said they wanted the opportunity to be involved in something different – usually something that was less academic and more practical;
- the fire service and the police wanted participants to recognise the consequences of dangerous and anti-social behaviours;
- parents, schools, support workers and the local authorities wanted Option One to encourage a positive attitude in the young people towards education and the future.

#### **6.5 Inputs**

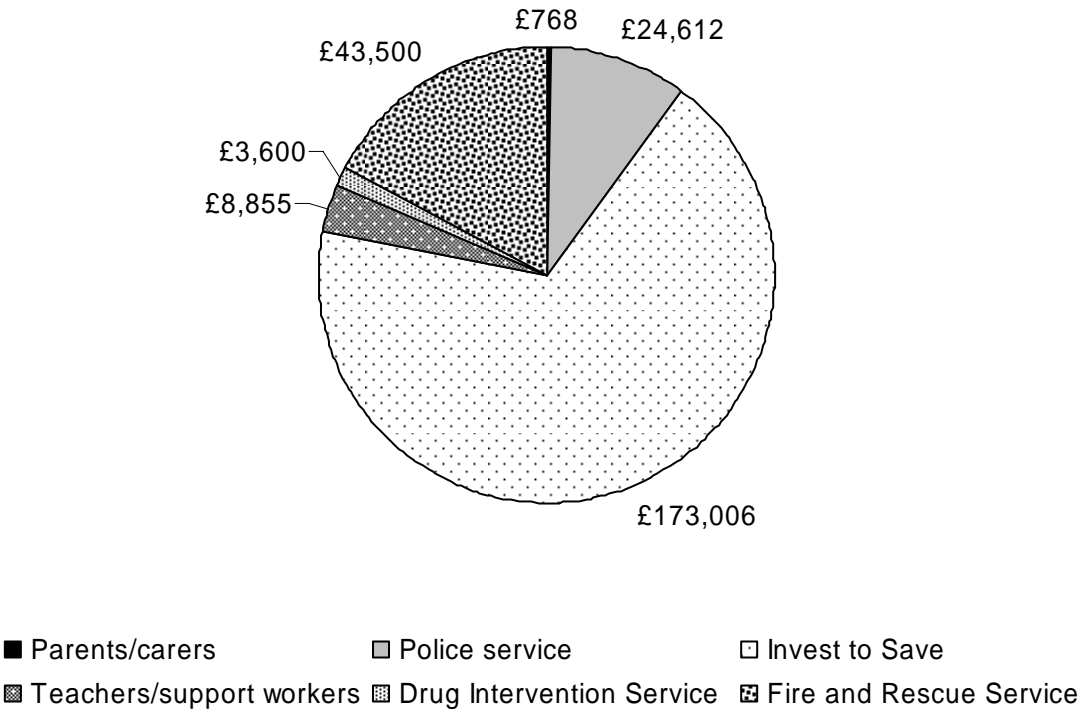
The SROI analysis required the evaluators to calculate the cost of providing Option One. The inputs are the resources that various stakeholders invest so that the courses can run and it was important to consider what every stakeholder brings, not just those who are providing the funding.

Figure 6.2 shows that the inputs to Option One arrive in the form of funding, primarily from *Invest to Save* (66%) but also from Cheshire Police, the use of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service premises and equipment, and also time from members of school staff, support workers, parents and carers, and the young people themselves.

The total unit cost for a participant on Option One was calculated to be £1,297.

In the SROI calculation, a monetary value was attached to the time input if it is clearly identifiable as an additional investment linked to a young person’s attendance on Option One. The cost of the time for the parents and carers who attended the graduation ceremony, for teachers or support workers to make referrals and provide support to the young people, and the cost of fire fighters and Drug Intervention Service staff to deliver the sessions on each course were included.

**Figure 6.2 Summary of inputs for 2007/08**





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## 6.6 Material outcomes

The impact evaluation illustrated what has changed for the stakeholders as a result of the Option One course. Six key outcomes for Option One were revealed that were used in the SROI analysis:

- young people got involved in positive activities following the course;
- parents/carers, teachers, support workers and participants all spoke about the way that Option One had encouraged students to think about their education and their future;
- parents/carers said that there had been an improvement in young people's behaviour and helpfulness at home;
- teachers and interviews with young people showed that an improvement in behaviour at school was an important outcome for some participants;
- the Option One course had resulted in a greater awareness of fire safety and consequent changes in behaviour with regard to hoax calls and lighting fires;
- in addition to fire safety, the Option One course includes sessions on drug and alcohol education, water and road safety. Information gained from the young people suggested that many of the health and safety messages from the Option One course had made them behave differently after learning more about the consequences of unsafe behaviours.

Once the key outcomes had been identified, the SROI required the evaluators to quantify how many people each of these positive outcomes applied to. This was achieved using a combination of the information on the referral forms (for example, the number of people who completed Option One who had been involved in certain types of anti-social or offending behaviours, or had an issue with, for example, attendance at school). This information was then applied to primary data which revealed how the behaviour of participants had changed by the end of the course.

## 6.7 Financial values and proxies

Table 6.2 shows the indicators and figures that were used to provide a financial value or proxy to the outcomes that had been achieved by some of the young people who attended the Option One course during the year to March 2008. For some of the

outcomes there was no direct financial value and so a proxy had to be used. The financial proxies that were applied were the cost of the following:

- antisocial behaviour, offending and criminal convictions;
- intensive family support and individual counselling sessions;
- being NEET (not in education, employment or training) on leaving school;
- fixed period and permanent exclusion from school;
- fire service attendance at small deliberate fires and hoax calls;
- insurance claims for young drivers.

**Table 6.2 Summary of values for 2007/08**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Unit cost</b>	<b>Return (attribution and deadweight included)</b>
Antisocial behaviour	32 incidents	£142	£4,544
Offending	22 individuals	£2,714	£59,708
Convictions	9 individuals	£4,585	£30,949
Intensive family support	9 individuals	£3,032	£21,830
Individual counselling	9 individuals	£400	£2,556
Not in employment, education or training	27 individuals	£4,247	£91,730
Fixed period exclusion from school	50 occasions, of which 5 were over 5 days	£300	£1,400
Permanent exclusion from school	2 individuals	£3,600	£5,760
Fire Service hoax call	10 calls, of which 5 were attended	£2180	£10,028
Deliberate small fire	25 fires	£2,180	£54,500
Dangerous driving	9 incidents	£5,097	£45,874

Behind each of the figures are a series of decisions that were made based on qualitative and quantitative data collected during the evaluation of Option One, existing research and professional judgements.

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## 6.8 The social return

The SROI analysis of Option One takes account of attribution and deadweight: drop-off was also considered. A discount rate of 3.5%, the social time preference rate recommended by HM Treasury, was also applied.

Although SROI can be used to predict savings over a longer period of time, this analysis was confined to four years as, with an average age of 14 years for the young people allocated to Option One, this would calculate the return up to the time that they reached 18 years old. The value of some outcomes was further restricted to two or three years. The decision to restrict the timeframe was in line with the conservative assumptions that were the foundation of this SROI analysis and as a result of limited information about the longer term impact of the programme for individual participants.

The total benefit of the Option One course over four years was as follows:

- the total financial input for this cohort, during 2007/08, was £254,341;
- a benefit of £951,400.30 has been calculated – that is £3.70 for every £1 that was invested or a ratio of 3.7:1;
- this means that the net benefit (or net present value) of Option One over four years would be £697,059.30.

The share of the value of Option One in the short term fell broadly into a four-way split of changes at school and aspirations for the future (19%), taking part in positive, rather than negative activities (46%), and ceasing involvement in the targeted behaviours of fire setting, hoax calls and dangerous driving (42%). A smaller portion of the value, 2%, was reflected in the improved relationships between parents/carers and their children.

An examination of the share of the value by stakeholders shows that, in the short term, the fire and rescue service and the police were the main beneficiaries (each with 34%), followed by young people and the community (each with 9%), schools (2%), and parents/carers and local government (1%).

A sensitivity analysis was conducted which illustrated the effect of reducing the value created by a number of the outcomes achieved by young people on the Option One course of the RESPECT programme but with these changes, the social return on

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investment ratio over four years remained at a minimum of £3.40 for every £1 that was spent in 2007/08.

The application of the SROI analysis illustrated the value of the benefits accrued in the short term as a result of, in this case, Option One of the RESPECT programme and how, if the outcomes are sustained, the net benefit will increase over time. The structures put into place to help sustain the impact are crucial and a longer term evaluation would be required to establish the extent to which benefits for the individual are maintained.

SROI helps to tell the story of the changes that have taken place for the different groups of people who are involved in the project. The assumptions or precise calculations used could be debated but this adds to the value of this mode of analysis – it can generate critical discussions about appropriate objectives, outcomes and ways of measuring them.

The perspective demanded by the SROI highlights the reasons for the RESPECT programme being an ideal candidate for *Invest to Save* funding:

- the success of the programme demands that local services work together to identify young people with appropriate needs and provide activities;
- where Option One, and the RESPECT programme as a whole, has resulted in positive outcomes for young people, the return is not only for the individual participant or agency making the referral but is widely distributed across a range of agencies and it can continue over an indefinite length of time.

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## Chapter 7

### Key messages from the evaluation

#### 7.1 Governance in partnership

- The Governance Board had a key role in monitoring the progress of the RESPECT programme by requiring reporting from different elements.
- It was a forum for troubleshooting and responding in an agreed manner.
- It facilitated partnership working at both operational and strategic levels.
- Its effectiveness was dependent upon:
  - cross representation from key stakeholders of sufficient seniority to effect change;
  - attendance and participation, the latter facilitated by an effective chair.

#### 7.2 Implementation of the programme

- The programme was not delivered exactly as planned; however, what emerged was a programme that reflected young people's differing needs.
- As a multi-faceted programme, the timescales for the implementation of each element varied. Communication between the different parts of the programme was crucial in the early stages and enabled the development of good working relationships.

#### 7.3 Interagency working

- To be effective, an interagency forum such as the Practitioner Group, needed to have a clear function.
- Interagency work and training resulted in the sharing of professional knowledge and expertise, providing an increasingly knowledgeable and skilled workforce to work with young people.

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#### **7.4 Referrals**

- An effective referral system resulted from well designed, accurate publicity material, distributed widely to those for whom it was relevant.
- For a targeted programme, the careful selection of young people to the programme in a timely fashion was vital i.e. when they were in a position to benefit from their involvement.
- It was important to see the referral as a process by which, first of all, the school and then each young person, was primed for involvement. Steps to the effective engagement of schools and young people were then taken.
- The participants needed to be of the right age so that they had time to transfer their learning back to the school environment.

#### **7.5 Engagement**

- A key ingredient to maximising the engagement of the young people on the targeted courses was the face-to-face contact with programme staff before the first session and individual support throughout the course to identify and discuss targets.
- For all elements of the RESPECT programme, the development of positive relationships between young people and staff was fundamental.
- Realistic expectations were required of young people who were particularly disaffected and had not engaged with other activities previously. Continued participation was a significant achievement for these participants.

#### **7.6 Outcomes for individuals**

- Positive outcomes for young people necessitated the transfer of learning from programme activities to other situations. Young people often needed support to be able to do this successfully.
- Conveying the learning objectives of tasks and activities to the young people (and for the targeted provision, their referrers) facilitated the development of participants and the assisted staff who were providing support to young people.

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- The activities engaged young people and provided opportunities for achievement. Individual reflection and the recognition of their achievement by others together were requirements for an increased level of confidence.

### **7.7 Outcomes for the community**

- The area based statistics on fires, hoax calls, anti-social behaviour, youth crime, school exclusion and absences, and young people not in education, employment and training provided background information about the changes in the localities covered by the programme. A more sensitive method, however, was required to assess the outcomes for the wider community.
- Social Return on Investment was a valuable methodology for the evaluation. In addition to its use as an evaluation tool, it would ideally be built into a programme at the planning stage so that the potential benefits could be forecast.
- The broad range of positive outcomes for young people illustrated that the benefits of the programme would be felt across a wide range of agencies and for a long period of time.
- It is easier to demonstrate the impact upon the community of an initiative based in a small locality, such as *On the Streets*, by the use of ward-based indicators such as deliberate fires and anti-social behaviour than in a much larger area where a very small proportion of the population were involved.

### **7.8 The evaluation and the future**

- Investment in the evaluation has been one of the strengths of the programme. The responsiveness of the partner agencies means that it has contributed to the development of the programme and to decision making about the future funding of the initiative.
- The evaluation has been flexible to adapt to the changes in the structure of the programme.
- Although the external evaluation has come to an end, the programme might consider continuing to collect data in order to inform decision making in the future.

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- The evaluation has produced evidence of the short and medium term impacts. It would be beneficial to reflect upon the longer term impacts in the future.



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